



Department of Justice

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Eastern District of California

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MERCED MAN CHARGED WITH TRAFFICKING AND POSSESSING IMAGES OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

FRESNO, Calif.—Acting United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown announced that a grand jury sitting in Fresno, returned a two-count indictment today against RICHARD CLYDE McNICHOLS, 31, of Merced, Calif., charging him with trafficking and possessing images of child pornography.

The case is the result of an investigation by the Merced Police Department.

According to Assistant United States Attorney David Gappa, who is prosecuting the case, the indictment alleges that McNICHOLS used a computer, modem, and the Internet to distribute, receive, and possess numerous images of child pornography from December 12, 2006 to September 1, 2008.

If convicted of these charges, McNICHOLS faces a maximum of 20 years, a lifetime term of supervised release, and a \$250,000 fine. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

McNICHOLS is currently detained at the Merced County Jail on state charges related to the same conduct.

This prosecution is part of the ongoing Department of Justice program Project Safe Childhood. For more about this initiative, visit www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae/psc.

Charges in an indictment are only allegations, and a defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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